UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1995/240
30 March 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

THE SITUATION CONCERNING WESTERN SAHARA

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted to the Security Council in pursuance of Council resolution 973 (1995) of 13 January 1995. It covers developments since my report of 14 December 1994 (S/1994/1420). It is divided into five main sections. Sections II and III cover the identification process and other aspects of the settlement plan (S/21360 and S/22464 and Corr.1). Section IV discusses the arrangements for the deployment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) at full strength and provides an update on the activities of the Mission's military and civilian police components. Section V is devoted to the financial aspects. Section VI contains my observations.

II. IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

2. Together with monitoring and verifying the cease-fire, the identification of potential voters, which started on 28 August 1994, remains the core activity of MINURSO at present. The identification started in two centres, one in Laayoune and another in the Tindouf area. During my visit to the Mission from 25 to 29 November 1994, I urged the parties to continue cooperating with my Deputy Special Representative, Mr. Erik Jensen, so as to facilitate rapid progress in the implementation of the settlement plan.

3. By the end of 1994, a second identification centre had opened on each side, bringing the total to four. In February 1995, a new centre was opened in the town of Smara in Western Sahara and another reopened in the El-Aiun refugee camp near Tindouf. This camp had suffered the most during the autumn rainstorms and flooding. On 9 March 1995, a seventh centre was inaugurated, in the town of Dakhla in the Territory. Arrangements have been completed to establish a centre also in the Dakhla camp, some 180 kilometres from Tindouf, which will be opened as soon as the necessary technical installations can be completed.

4. As pointed out in my December report (S/1994/1420), the identification of potential voters is a complex operation. It has been agreed that identification

can take place only when two tribal leaders (sheikhs), one from each side, are present to testify. The representatives of the two parties and an observer of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) are also expected to attend. It follows that work has to be suspended when one side or the other experiences difficulties in making its sheikh available or, preferring a delay, has its sheikh fail to arrive, arrive late or leave the centre. Moreover, both sides' earlier insistence on strict reciprocity has meant that whenever, for whatever reason, identification cannot take place at a centre on one side, work is automatically suspended at a centre on the other.

5. The process of identifying each potential voter takes time. It is only through meticulous examination of material evidence and through detailed interviews with applicants, with the assistance of the sheikhs, that the identity of each individual can be convincingly established and the extent to which he or she qualifies under any of the criteria can be determined. The proceedings cannot be rushed if they are to carry conviction. In most cases, the lack of documents greatly complicates the operation. In addition to interviews, every applicant has his or her photograph and fingerprint taken and, after identification, is given a receipt. The receipt serves solely to facilitate retrieval of the relevant file; it has no intrinsic value, since voters cards will be issued only after cases have been carefully reviewed and voters lists published.

6. The degree of attention which the representatives of the two parties pay to every step of the process, their insistence on receiving from MINURSO full convocation lists in good time, their concern for every question asked and the notes that they record on every case, illustrate vividly the importance that they attach to the identification process. In a society where virtually all individuals are known and every tribal subgroup is represented on both sides, it would be obvious if people were being excluded. But to make quite sure that no applicant is prevented from coming forward, provision has also been made for individuals to present themselves at any MINURSO identification centre while the process continues. This is already occurring, but will become more important at a later stage. This painstaking and somewhat cumbersome approach is the surest way of achieving transparency, since both sides are fully informed about all aspects and any attempt by one side to control or influence the process would at once be apparent to the other.

7. On 14 December 1994, the Government of Spain forwarded important archival material to my Deputy Special Representative, at his request. This comprised 48 volumes of birth certificates, 19 volumes of marriage certificates, 11 volumes of divorce certificates and 11 volumes of death certificates, which together constitute the Registro Civil Cheranico del Sahara Occidental. These documents have been classified by MINURSO identification staff and are proving of considerable value as aids to identification, especially for doubtful cases, and for the exhaustive review of all files currently undertaken in conjunction with the observations received from the representatives of the parties.

8. From the start, however, the single greatest obstacle to identification has been the issue of tribal leaders. The settlement plan gave tribal leaders the responsibility for identifying applicants as being the persons they claim to be and as belonging to a particular tribal group (subfraction); the sheikhs were

also to provide oral testimony relevant to the eligibility criteria. Most sheikhs, elected as they were in 1973, were already of mature years at the time and many have since died or become incapacitated. There are, in consequence, a large number of subfractions, one third of the total, without a recognized tribal leader on at least one side. Until last year, this unresolved issue had been the most intractable obstacle to identification.

9. In the summer of 1994, my Deputy Special Representative proposed to the parties that the process start with those subfractions where there was a surviving and competent sheikh on each side. At the same time, he advised the parties that, whatever the survival rate, there should always be the same number of sheikhs present for each side, normally one each, during any given identification session. Both parties agreed to this proposal.

10. The Deputy Special Representative then focused on the search for a formula to deal with the other cases. The views of the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) and the Government of Morocco diverged markedly. The Frente POLISARIO argued that to avoid any subsequent manipulation of the selection of sheikhs, only sheikhs elected in the Territory in 1973, or their eldest sons, should be eligible to testify. Morocco opposed the view that the 1973 list of sheikhs could not be changed. It argued that the 1973 election of sheikhs under Spanish rule was the only one ever held in the Territory, that sheikhs were traditionally co-opted and not elected, that not all Saharan sheikhs were necessarily in the Territory in 1973 and that those elected in 1973 might subsequently have been replaced by others, since their term of office was to last only five years.

11. A measure of convergence began to emerge recently. On 10 February 1995, my Deputy Special Representative addressed similar letters to the Moroccan authorities and to the Frente POLISARIO in which he set out his proposal in detail. A surviving sheikh from the 1973 election was to be preferred; then his eldest surviving son; then a candidate from the election of 1973, normally by descending number of votes received; and failing that, the party would put forward three names from which the Chairman of the Identification Commission would select one, after consultation with the other party. The three names were to be of persons from the subfraction concerned, of recognized standing in their community, of appropriate age, without any official position and themselves included in the census lists of 1974. Attached to his letters was a list of all 88 tribal subgroups (subfractions) included in the 1974 census and such information as was available to MINURSO concerning the sheikhs, sons of sheikhs and non-elected candidates from the 1973 election; in the 29 cases where no such person was known, a blank space was left for the three names to be provided by the parties.

12. In their written response of 13 February 1995, the Moroccan authorities maintained that there had been no prior commitment on their part to certain of the limitations, but they took note of further clarification offered in writing by my Deputy Special Representative on 18 February 1995. On 23 and 25 February 1995, meetings took place in Tindouf and in Laayoune with the responsible officials of the Frente POLISARIO and of the Government of Morocco respectively. At the meeting in Laayoune, the Moroccan authorities provided detailed statistical information concerning the whereabouts of all members of

the subfractions listed as resident in the Territory. Arrangements were also discussed regarding the identification centres to which those persons would come when their number locally was insufficient to warrant the deployment of tribal leaders. The Moroccan authorities undertook to make available names of candidates to replace sheikhs as required. On 26 February 1995, the Frente POLISARIO submitted a full response in writing, reiterating certain concerns and returning the list of subfractions completed with the names of persons to be considered as replacements in the absence of sheikhs.

13. As indicated in paragraph 3 above, there will soon be four centres on each side, bringing the total to eight. Sixteen identification teams are to be assigned to these eight centres. Local conditions and logistics permitting, experience has shown that two identification teams working in tandem at each centre have the capacity to process up to 150 cases each day. However, the increasing percentage of subfractions represented by 50 individuals or fewer in an area limits MINURSO's ability to achieve this figure at all centres. However, with the latest agreement on tribal representatives and the information provided by the parties, as described in the preceding paragraph, it is now realistic to expect that approximately 20,000 applicants could be processed per month at eight centres.

14. Once additional qualified staff and equipment become available, two more centres are to be established, if the parties concur in what may have to be an unbalanced arrangement. There would then be 10 centres. Provision has also been made for the deployment of five mobile teams to deal with smaller numbers in more remote places. It is estimated that as many as 25,000 persons could then be identified monthly. This, however, will require an average weekly output over two times greater than the best weekly figure yet achieved and will be contingent upon the smooth functioning of the complicated logistical arrangements and the full cooperation of both parties.

15. As of mid-March 1995, over 21,300 persons had been identified. This represents 16.5 per cent (13,473 out of 81,855) of those applicants in the Territory about whom information is fully available to MINURSO and 27.3 per cent (7,870 out of 28,831) of those in the camps in the Tindouf area. MINURSO has complete computerized information relevant to all applications received from persons to be identified in the four population centres in Western Sahara (Boujdour, Dakhla, Laayoune and Smara) and in the camps in the Tindouf area (Awsard, Dakhla, El-Aiun and Es-Smara camps). The data processing of the additional 14,568 applications received in Mauritania, in spite of the many technical problems, has also been completed.

16. The graph attached as annex I to the present report shows in schematic form the progress achieved in the number of persons identified per week since the start of identification in late August 1994. It is encouraging that since the beginning of this year progress has been steady and incremental, with the exception of one week in January and another at the end of February, when there was no identification because of public holidays on both sides and a dispute concerning a sheikh.

17. The number of OAU observers has been increased to eight. The most recent arrivals came in good time for the opening of the additional centres. The OAU

observers are assigned to follow the proceedings, the normal practice being for one observer to be present at every centre during identification. Collaboration between MINURSO and the OAU observers is very good.

III. OTHER ASPECTS RELEVANT TO THE FULFILMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT PLAN

18. The Security Council, in its resolution 973 (1995), requested me to report on my final plans for implementing all elements of the settlement plan and on the responses of the parties to them. In this context, it may be useful to recall, as in my 12 July 1994 report to the Council (S/1994/819), the main elements of the plan. During the transitional period, the United Nations is to organize and conduct a referendum in the Territory to enable the people of Western Sahara to choose between independence and integration with Morocco. To this end, there is to be a cease-fire followed by an exchange of prisoners of war, a reduction in the Moroccan troops in the Territory and confinement of the combatants of both sides to specific locations. In order to ensure that the necessary conditions exist for the holding of a free and fair referendum, the United Nations will monitor other aspects of the administration of the Territory, especially the maintenance of law and order. Following the proclamation of an amnesty, political prisoners will be released. All laws or regulations that might impede the holding of a free and fair referendum will be suspended as deemed necessary. All refugees and other Western Saharan residents outside the Territory who wish to return will be enabled to do so by the United Nations, after the latter has established their right to vote.

19. The cease-fire is already in place. The following paragraphs cover the other activities undertaken or to be undertaken in fulfilment of the plan.

Reduction of Moroccan troops in the Territory

20. In his report of 19 April 1991 on the implementation of the settlement plan (S/22464 and Corr.1), the then Secretary-General reported that Morocco was prepared to reduce its troops in the Territory to a level not exceeding 65,000 all ranks, within a period of 11 weeks from the beginning of the transitional period. Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar accepted this as an appropriate, substantial and phased reduction in accordance with the settlement proposals. My Deputy Special Representative has recently met with the Commander of the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces in the southern zone, Major-General Abdelaziz Bennani, who assured him of Morocco's preparedness to implement fully the provisions of the settlement plan relating to the reduction of Moroccan troops in the Territory, once D-Day and the start of the transitional period have been determined.

Confinement of troops to designated locations

21. Paragraph 15 of document S/22464 states that, in accordance with paragraph 56 of document S/21360, all remaining Moroccan troops will be located in static or defensive positions along the sand wall, known as the berm, with the limited exceptions mentioned in that paragraph. MINURSO military observers will monitor these troops and, towards this end, will be co-located with Moroccan subsector headquarters and with the Moroccan support and logistics

units remaining elsewhere in the Territory. MINURSO military observers will also conduct extensive patrols by land and air to ensure observance of the cease-fire and the confinement of the Moroccan troops to the designated locations. In addition, they will monitor the custody of certain arms and ammunition.

22. It will be recalled that, in accordance with the settlement plan, my Special Representative is to designate the locations to which Frente POLISARIO troops will be confined, with their arms, ammunition and military equipment. Preliminary consultations have been initiated on this issue so that I can take the necessary decisions and proceed with the arrangements that will be required in this regard. MINURSO military observers will be deployed at each of the designated locations in order to monitor the Frente POLISARIO troops.

Independent jurist and release of political prisoners and detainees

23. The settlement plan (S/21360, paras. 33 (b) and 70) specifies that an independent jurist will be appointed by the Secretary-General who, in cooperation with the parties, will take steps to ensure the release of all Saharan political prisoners and detainees before the beginning of the referendum campaign, so that they can participate freely and without restriction in the referendum. I have appointed Mr. Emmanuel Roucounas (Greece), a prominent international jurist, as the independent jurist. I hope that, with the cooperation of both parties, he can expeditiously discharge his task.

Exchange of prisoners of war

24. The settlement plan provides for an exchange of prisoners of war under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). My Deputy Special Representative has been in contact with ICRC, which has visited prisoners of war on both sides. ICRC has stated that it is ready to start working on their release as soon as the parties are ready to do so. It remains my earnest hope that further sustained efforts will enable ICRC to achieve the release of all prisoners of war from both sides as soon as possible after the transitional period begins.

Organization of the referendum

25. The settlement plan provides for the establishment of a Referendum Commission to assist the Special Representative in the organization and conduct of the referendum. The functions of the Referendum Commission, which include measures for the referendum campaign and the actual conduct of the referendum, are specified in paragraphs 63 to 66 of document S/21360 and further detailed in paragraphs 25 to 31 of document S/22464. The Referendum Commission will absorb appropriately qualified staff of the Identification Commission, upon completion of the latter's tasks of identification and registration.

26. In my last report to the Security Council (S/1994/1420), I noted that the draft code of conduct for the referendum campaign had already been completed. It was forwarded to the two parties on 13 December 1994. The Frente POLISARIO submitted detailed comments and proposals on 31 January 1995 and the Government of Morocco on 15 February. The replies received reflect major differences

between the two sides on several issues. The United Nations Secretariat has reconciled their versions to the extent possible in order to finalize the code without undue delay.

Return of refugees, other Western Saharans and members of the Frente POLISARIO entitled to vote

27. The modalities for the repatriation of those Western Saharans who are identified as eligible to vote in the referendum and who wish to return to the Territory are described in document S/21360 (paras. 33 (c) and (d) and 72-74) and further detailed in document S/22464 (paras. 34-36). The repatriation programme forms an integral part of the MINURSO operation and is to be carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in accordance with its mandate. UNHCR's task will be threefold: to ascertain and record the repatriation wishes of each Western Saharan as he or she is registered as a voter by the Identification Commission; to issue the necessary documentation to the members of his or her immediate family; and to establish and manage, in cooperation with MINURSO, which will provide security, the reception centres that will be established in the Territory for the returning Western Saharans.

28. A UNHCR technical team visited the mission area from 2 to 15 February 1995 in order to review the plans for the repatriation operation. It visited potential repatriation sites in the northern and southern sectors of the Territory, as well as all the refugee camps in the Tindouf area in Algeria. It also undertook a full review of the work it will carry out with the administration, civilian police and military components of MINURSO.

29. The UNHCR team estimated that the preparatory work, which has already commenced, will require six months. Repatriation would then begin shortly after the Identification Commission had finished its work, and would be completed in about 80 days, immediately before the referendum campaign. UNHCR would thereafter maintain a presence in the Territory, as necessary, in order to fulfil its monitoring role for returnees, in accordance with its internationally accepted responsibilities.

IV. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF MINURSO AT FULL STRENGTH

30. Under resolution 973 (1995), the Security Council requested me to confirm, inter alia, the arrangements with regard to the logistic, personnel and other resources required for the deployment of MINURSO at full strength. As noted in my last report, I dispatched a technical team to MINURSO in November 1994 to review these requirements. As indicated above, in February 1995 UNHCR also sent a team to the mission area to update its plans for the voluntary repatriation of refugees. On the basis of the information gathered by these missions, a preliminary logistics plan and financial implications for the deployment of MINURSO at full strength have been prepared. This plan has been closely coordinated with UNHCR's own logistic requirements, with a view to maximizing the use of resources and sharing the cost of common assets. The plan will need to be further refined as soon as a decision is made on the date for the beginning of the transitional period.

Military component

31. The current strength of MINURSO's military component, headed by the Force Commander, Brigadier-General André Van Baelen (Belgium), totals 288 personnel, comprising 240 military observers and 48 military support personnel (see annex II).

32. As noted in my previous reports, pending the fulfilment of the conditions necessary for the commencement of the transitional period, the military mandate of MINURSO remains restricted to monitoring and verifying the cease-fire, which has been in effect since 6 September 1991. MINURSO continues to receive good cooperation from the parties in regard to the maintenance of the cease-fire. During the reporting period, three minor cease-fire violations, pertaining to unauthorized movements by both parties, were observed. MINURSO military observers conduct daily patrols in all parts of the Territory, undertaking a monthly average of 600 ground and 140 aerial reconnaissance patrols in extremely harsh conditions and over great distances (see map at annex III).

33. The original military requirements of MINURSO, described in document S/22464 of 19 April 1991, consisted of a total military strength of about 1,695 (all ranks) as follows: 550 military observers; an infantry battalion of 700 (all ranks); an air support group of 110 (all ranks) to operate and maintain four fixed-wing aircraft and eight transport helicopters; a signals unit of 45 (all ranks); a medical unit of 50 (all ranks); a composite military police company of 40 (all ranks); and a logistics battalion of 200 (all ranks). These requirements have been thoroughly reviewed and it has been determined that they remain largely appropriate, although adjustments may have to be made to the size of certain units. In addition, based on the experience gained since the deployment of MINURSO, and given the conditions prevalent in Western Sahara, it is considered that an engineering unit of approximately 100 (all ranks) would also be required to perform, inter alia, the following tasks: limited mine clearing; basic infrastructure repair; and the construction and operation of water points in certain specific areas essential to MINURSO operations. Every effort will be made to include this unit within the overall military strength of 1,695 (all ranks).

Civilian police component

34. Under resolution 973 (1995), the Security Council authorized an increase in the deployed strength of the civilian police component of MINURSO from 55 to 160 observers. As of 25 March 1995, the component totalled 78 personnel from the following countries: Austria (10); Germany (5); Hungary (13); Malaysia (15); Nigeria (15); Norway (5); Togo (5); and Uruguay (10). An additional 26 civilian police observers from Ghana (15) and Togo (11) are scheduled to be deployed shortly, bringing the total strength of the component to 104. The strength of the civilian police component will be further increased to 160, as additional identification and registration centres become operational.

35. It will be recalled that, in accordance with document S/22464, the civilian police component was to total 300 observers. The Civilian Police Commissioner

has recommended that its strength be increased by 99 observers. This recommendation is being reviewed.

36. The activities of the civilian police component are currently linked to those of the Identification Commission and have expanded as the work of the Commission has increased. MINURSO civilian police observers maintain a 24-hour presence at the identification centres in order to ensure their security and to verify that no person is denied entry for the purposes of identification. The police component also provides technical assistance to the Identification Commission, as appropriate.

37. During the reporting period, the Civilian Police Commissioner, Colonel Jurgen Friedrich Reimann (Germany), completed his tour of duty with MINURSO and was replaced by Colonel Wolf-Dieter Krampe (Germany), who assumed his functions on 13 March 1995.

38. I have had preliminary consultations with Member States to ascertain their readiness to provide the military and civilian police personnel required for the deployment of MINURSO at full strength. Initial informal responses received thus far indicate that Member States will be in a position to provide most of the military and civilian police personnel required. However, offers are still awaited regarding some of the specialized units. The Secretariat will continue its consultations with potential contributing countries to ensure that contingents are made available in a timely manner and that they are deployed with all the standard basic equipment.

Civilian personnel

39. MINURSO's present authorized staff level is 251, including Professional staff (81), General Service staff (78), Field Service staff (37) and local staff (55). With the expansion of the Identification Commission under resolution 973 (1995), the number of civilian personnel considered necessary to carry out the Mission's present functions is 132 Professionals, 145 General Service, 43 Field Service and 90 local staff, totalling some 410 persons. These requirements, along with other budgetary issues, are presently under consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The full deployment of MINURSO will probably not require additional Professional staff, for, as noted above, those presently serving with the Identification Commission will take on new functions during the transitional period. It is estimated, however, that additional General Service, Field Service and local staff will be required, particularly during the two-month period leading up to and during the referendum. Approximately 300 polling officers will also be required for two to three weeks at the time of the referendum. The Secretariat is exploring the possibility of arranging for the recruitment of United Nations Volunteers for this purpose.

Equipment requirements

40. As mentioned in previous reports, the extreme weather conditions in the mission area have taken a toll on MINURSO's equipment during the past three and a half years. In addition, MINURSO's current air-support and communications systems are inadequate for the full deployment of the Mission. These factors

have been taken into account in updating the logistics plan for full deployment. They may also have implications for the eventual level of civilian and/or military personnel required.

41. Although the logistics plan will be further refined closer to the start of the transitional period, preliminary cost estimates for the deployment of MINURSO at full strength will be provided in an addendum to the present report. As noted above, it is the intention that, to the extent possible, MINURSO will share the cost of common assets, such as water, accommodation and power, with UNHCR at those sites where MINURSO and UNHCR will be co-located. This will be taken into account in further refining the cost estimates.

V. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

42. Authorization has been granted to me, under the terms of General Assembly decision 49/466 and resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994, to enter into a financial commitment in an amount not to exceed $17,290,100 gross ($16,130,300 net) for the maintenance of MINURSO for the period from 1 January to 31 March 1995. My report on the financing of MINURSO for the period from 1 December 1994 to 30 June 1995 and for the maintenance of the Mission on a monthly basis after 30 June 1995, including the expansion of the Identification Commission, as approved by the Council in resolution 973 (1995), has been submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its current session.

43. The cash flow situation of the special account of MINURSO remains precarious. As of 21 March 1995, unpaid assessed contributions to it amounted to $20.3 million. Consequently, reimbursement of troop costs has been made only up to the period ending 31 August 1994. In addition, amounts are outstanding for contingent-owned equipment. In order to provide the Mission with the necessary cash flow, a total of $8.2 million has been borrowed from other peace-keeping accounts. These loans remain unpaid. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peace-keeping operations on 21 March 1995 was $1,678.5 million.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

44. Patience and perseverance have helped to launch the identification process and to overcome the numerous problems that have arisen. Over 21,000 persons have been identified. The suspicion and mistrust that have characterized the process are gradually being dampened. However, they can easily be rekindled by those who, for motives of their own, may wish to undermine the process.

45. Less than a year ago, very few believed that the identification process would even start. Last autumn, after it began at last, the pace was such as to inspire little faith in its being completed within the foreseeable future. Now, the Security Council has adopted resolution 973 (1995), the additional resources necessary for its implementation have been promised and agreement has been reached on how identification might be carried forward. The holding of the referendum has thus become a real possibility.

46. There are currently seven identification centres, with six functioning at any one time. Plans are in hand to expand the operation further. The computerization of the applications received and, in particular, the agreement of the parties to a formula for choosing tribal leaders to replace sheikhs who are no longer living or capable offer the best prospects so far for progress towards the referendum.

47. The parties have been drawn into a new degree of engagement. At the same time, concern about the outcome has contributed to increasing nervousness. Completion of the operation will depend on the smooth functioning of the complex logistical arrangements, the ready availability of sheikhs and tribal leaders and flexibility on the part of representatives and observers. The difficulties are complicated by the vast distances, in a territory of 266,000 square kilometres, and the dispersal of the members of each tribal subgroup throughout the towns of Western Sahara and the camps near Tindouf.

48. Progress in identification will depend more than anything on the collaboration of both parties. I urge them to abandon any insistence on strict reciprocity in the number of centres and on the linkage of a centre on one side with a specific centre on the other, since the distribution of population is uneven. Nor should limits be imposed on the numbers to be identified on any given day. There should be no reluctance to permit the process to advance more expeditiously in one place than the other. A responsible official should be always available to meet with the Identification Commission to resolve difficulties as they arise.

49. It is equally important that the parties proceed expeditiously with the implementation of the other aspects of the settlement plan.

50. Morocco has indicated its willingness to proceed with the reduction of its troops in the Territory, as required by the settlement plan. It has also indicated its commitment to cooperate in implementing the other provisions relevant to the confinement of its forces. I hope that my Deputy Special Representative can similarly count on the cooperation of the Frente POLISARIO as regards the cantonment of its troops.

51. In my last report, I expressed the hope that progress achieved in the identification and registration process by 31 March 1995, would enable me to recommend 1 June 1995 as the date (D-Day) for the start of the transitional period. While the rate of identification is increasing, the progress achieved to date does not permit me to make this recommendation now. If, however, the parties make it possible to raise the rate of identification to the 25,000 per month foreseen in paragraph 14 above, and if they cooperate in resolving expeditiously the remaining issues in the settlement plan, it can be envisaged that the transitional period could begin in August 1995 and the referendum be held in January 1996.

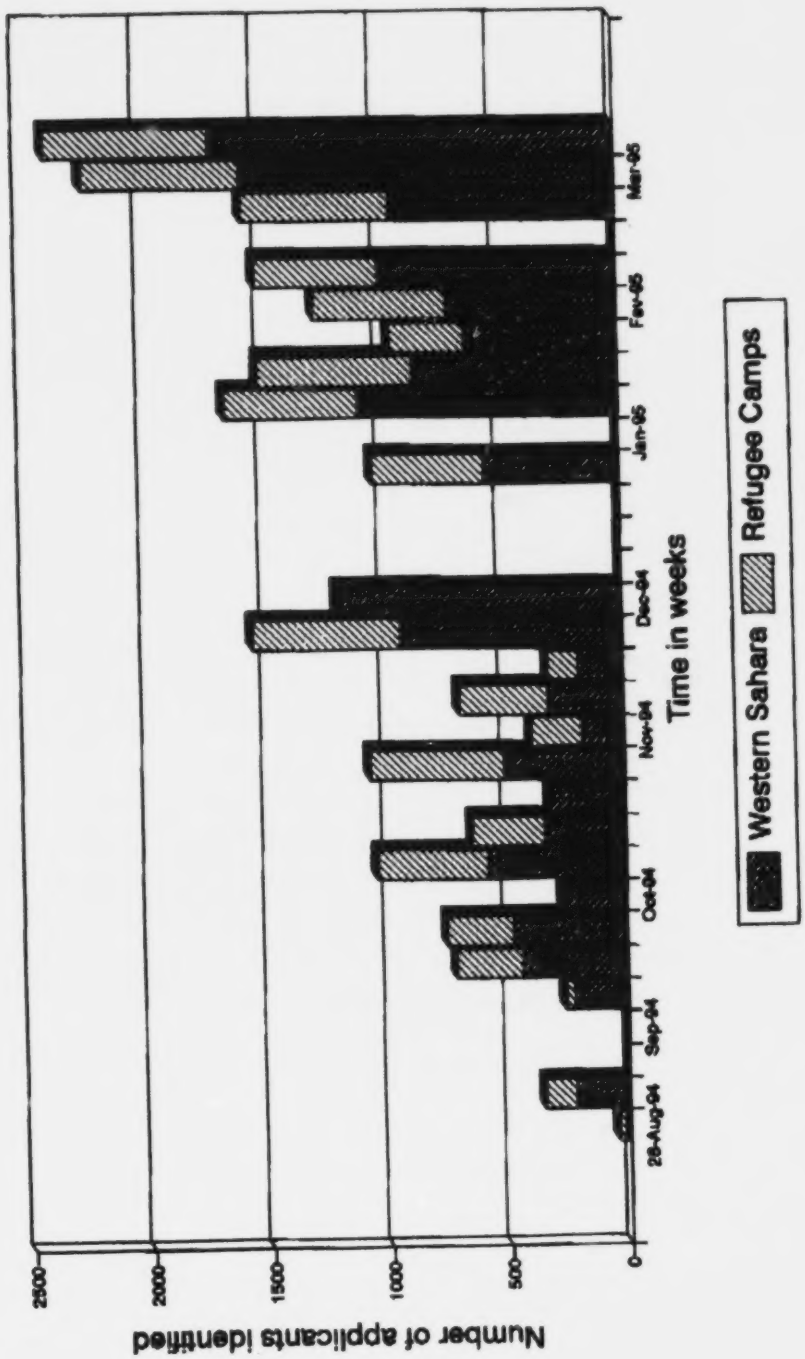
52. Finally, I would like to underline the significance of the settlement plan for the whole region. This is why I urge all concerned to maintain their commitment to its implementation and why I recommend that there be no lessening of the Council's support for MINURSO at this stage.

53. In closing, I should like to pay tribute to my Deputy Special Representative, the Force Commander, the Civilian Police Commissioner, and to all the civilian, military and police personnel of MINURSO, for their determined efforts in furthering the settlement plan.

ANNEX I

Identification figures
MINURSO

(per week)



ANNEX II

Composition of MINURSO military component

(a) Military observers

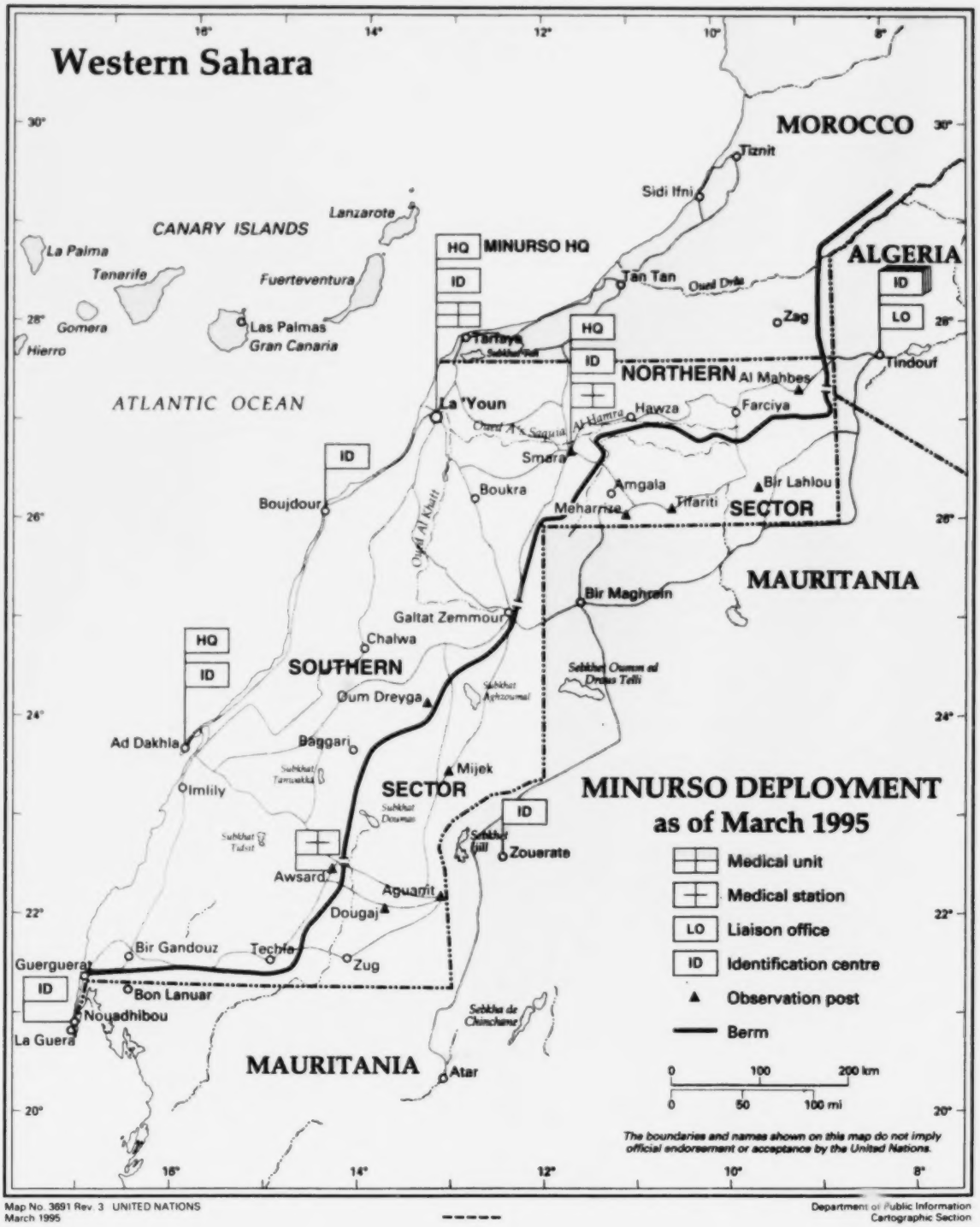
Argentina	7
Austria	4
Bangladesh	7
Belgium	1
China	20
Egypt	9
El Salvador	2
France	30
Ghana	6
Greece	1
Guinea	1
Honduras	14
Ireland	9
Italy	6
Kenya	10
Republic of Korea	2
Malaysia	15
Nigeria	4
Pakistan	4
Poland	2
Russian Federation	30
Tunisia	9
Uruguay	15
United States of America	30
Venezuela	2
Total	240

(b) Military support personnel

(i) Medical Unit: Republic of Korea	40
(ii) Clerical: Ghana	8
Total	48
Grand total	288

ANNEX III

MINURSO deployment map



Map No. 3691 Rev. 3 UNITED NATIONS
March 1995

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section